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problems of glaciation and desiccation. The author believes that glaciation in a country so dry as Central Asia must be due rather to increased humidity than to lowered temperature. He holds that deglaciation and desiccation must be carefully distinguished and that they are not necessarily parts of the same process. He suggests that the decrease of glaciers may cause an increase in the size of rivers and thereby may produce a result apparently the reverse of desiccation. This springs from his idea that the basins of Central Asia are practically self-contained so far as their supply of water is concerned; that is, that they receive almost no water from the surrounding oceans and give up almost none. The process of desiccation according to him is largely due to a gradual diminution of the available water in the central basins of Central Asia. Long ago an encroachment of the sea filled the basins and supplied a large amount of water whose gradual escape beyond the limits of the basins has brought on desiccation.

In regard to changes of climate during historic times Mr. Rickmers is decided in his opinions. In the first place, as he says on page 510, "Happenings of the present time and even of the last century are quite immaterial in this problem. . . . Five hundred or 1000 years form about the smallest unit of sub-division. The abandonment of the dead cities of the Lop basin (Tarim) is only just admissible as evidence. . . . Anything observed during the past century, or covered by the latest exact scientific records, such as the meteorological observations or the rise of Lake Aral during the last thirty years, does not count at all." Again, on page 519, speaking of Lake Aral, he says: "Berg has shown a rise of the lake from 1880 to 1901 amounting to an average of 90 mm. per year. He uses this undeniable fact as an argument against progressive desiccation with which, of course, it need not have anything to do." This point is well emphasized because many writers have fallen exactly into Berg's error. Rickmers' studies leave him convinced that there is a "stubborn tendency" toward desiccation which may, however, be slightly interrupted by periodic fluctuations. "Looking backward," he says (p. 523), "a progressive desiccation attacking the irrigation fringe seems fairly certain and need not have been very great in order to affect many thousands of people. It was more extreme and rapid in the Lop basin than in the Duab." As to the future he contents himself with saying that the chances are in favor of a continuation of present conditions.

ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON.

Anson Burlingame and the First Chinese Mission to Foreign Powers. By Frederick Wells Williams. x and 370 pp. Ill., index. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1912. \$2. 8½ x 6.

If the story of Burlingame were to be written at all it is well that it has fallen into such sympathetic hands, for Prof. Williams was so situated at his most impressionable period that the men and principles who and which were developing at the gates of China were household words.

The career of Anson Burlingame follows a sharp line of cleavage. On one side he is to be studied as a representative of American polity not only in the Far East but at home as well, a polity based on utter ignorance and developed by timorous and vote-saving submission to the violence of Sand Lot oratory upon our Pacific shore line. On the other side he demands attention as the forerunner, indeed the discoverer, of an external polity for China, an empire which had endured throughout the other history of the world, content in its own self-satisfied seclusion and as ignorant as incurious of the exact position of the barbarian nations. In this latter and less comprehensible division of the work Prof. Williams has pursued a very direct and cautious method. It is in the very essence of conditions at the Chinese court and in the dominant circle of the literati that he has by no means been able to make it clear that Burlingame was sent abroad as the representative of the Dragon Throne in a whole-hearted desire that China should take a place among the nations of the world. It must probably remain impossible of determination whether the Chinese court really intended to learn the true position of its oldest civilization in relation to the newer civilizations which it probably scarcely comprehended to be civilizations in any sort, or whether the Burlingame mission was devised as a convenient sop to the varied demands of the foreign powers. Was Burlingame the directing mind or was he but a convenient pawn in the game? Prof. Williams regards him as the former. The verdict of history is valuable only in proportion as it has data

upon which to formulate its judgment; it is most improbable that history will ever have more data than those which the author has here assembled.

WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

China, the Country and Its People. By G. Waldo Browne. With an Introduction by the Hon. John D. Long. xiii and 477 pp. Dana Estes & Co., Boston. \$2.50. 10 x 7½.

At some time some benefactor of the race will insist that popular works on geographical themes shall be written with scrupulous accuracy. Really the obligation is infinitely greater in the case of popular works where the readers are left quite defenceless against the author, for professional geographers can correct for themselves the errors which creep into professional treatises, while the untrained reader is led far astray. China has become of foremost interest in the present overthrow of the last Tatar dynasty. The reader is entitled to have a story without distortion such as appears too frequently in this volume. Interesting as the observance is to students of social customs, we can imagine that the couvade is a matter of scant significance to the general reader, but if the author felt that his theme required five lines and a couplet on the subject, as on page 131, he might have seen to it that it was not described as couvade. There is an unusual mechanical feature in this book: it is only upon the right hand pages that there is a running head line and page number, the left hand pages being left bald. In one particular the work has peculiar value. Many of the abundant illustrations are reproduced from photographs. But at least half of the pictures are reproductions in line of a famous series of colored lithographs which were published in Paris some time before 1860. The original prints are now a great treasure to collectors, their reproduction here makes them in this wise accessible to many who might not be able to see the originals.

WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

Le Tibet Révolté vers Népémakö, la Terre Promise des Tibétains. Par Jacques Bacot. 364 pp. Maps, ill. Hachette et Cie, Paris, 1912. Fr. 15. 9½ x 6.

The author, having been in Tibet in 1907 and written thereupon a noteworthy volume, returns to Tibet in 1909 and asks himself what there can be, what there really is, about a land so inaccessible and so inhospitable which brings back the traveler who has once experienced its pains. A land, he calls it, of shepherds and of monks, forbidden land to strangers, cut off from the world and such a near neighbor of heaven that the natural occupation of its people is prayer. This narrative gives us to see somewhat of the reason. Bacot does not pretend that this is a pleasant land, he minimizes none of the inconveniences and the dangers of the travel, he makes no excuse for the dirtiest land on earth; but his story is filled with the delight in which he pushed among the mountains and forced his way against opposition. His route lay eastward of the line of British approach to Tibet; a country was traversed which had not even been touched by the devoted and anonymous agents of the Indian Trigonometrical Survey. Upon his outward march from Yun-nan-sen he opened new territory in the east of unknown Tibet and penetrated as far north as Tchangou, where he touched the region explored by Mr. Rockhill. From that point he turned south in unknown valleys as far as Conkaling, thence westward to connect his survey with his own former observations in 1907 in the valley of the upper Salwen, thence returning south along the rivers with which his former exploration had made him familiar. He is a shrewd observer and his description of this remote Tibet loses nothing of interest in his vivacious style of narrative.

WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

The Progress of Japan, 1853-1871. By J. H. Gubbins. 323 pp. Map. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1911. 9 x 6.

The author considers the transformation of Japan from a nation living in seclusion to a great and modern civilized power, to have occurred between the arrival of Commodore Perry in Japan in 1853, and the signing of the Portsmouth Convention in 1905. He divides this time into two periods, the first comprising the rise and fall of the Shogunate, the administrative rulers as distinguished from the sovereigns of Japan, which ended with the abolition of feudalism in 1871. It is with this preliminary stage that Mr. Gubbins especially deals. He